

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1 – 9. (cancelled)

10. (currently amended): A stack of dielectric layers located over the surface of a substrate and comprising a first dielectric layer formed of a first material having a first etch rate and a second dielectric layer formed of a second material having a second etch rate, wherein the first dielectric layer is interposed between the surface of the substrate and the second dielectric layer, wherein when in each layer is formed of a different the first material is different than the second material, wherein the materials having have detectably different etch characteristics but generally equal dielectric constants, and wherein the first etch rate is greater than the second etch rate.

11. (currently amended): A stack as claimed in Claim 10 wherein the etch selectivity between first and second dielectric layers ratio of the first etch rate to the second etch rate is at least 2.5:1.

12. (cancelled)

13. (currently amended): A stack as claimed in Claim 10 wherein the difference in the dielectric constants of the first and second materials of adjacent layers varies by less than 10%.

14-16. (cancelled)

17. (new): A stack as claimed in Claim 10 wherein the ratio of the first etch rate to the second etch rate is between 2:1 and 3:1.

18. (new): A stack as claimed in Claim 10, wherein the first dielectric layer comprises carbon-doped SiO₂ and the second dielectric layer comprises carbon-doped silicon nitride.

19. (new): A stack as claimed in Claim 10, wherein the first dielectric layer comprises carbon-doped SiO₂ and the second dielectric layer comprises nitrogen-doped SiC.

20. (new): A stack as claimed in Claim 10, wherein a dielectric constant of each of the first and second materials is less than 3.5.

21. (new): A stack as claimed in Claim 20 wherein a difference in the dielectric constants of the first and second materials is less than 10%.

22. (new): A stack as claimed in Claim 21 wherein the ratio of the first etch rate to the second etch rate is between 2:1 and 3:1.

23. (new): A stack of dielectric layers located over the surface of a substrate and comprising a carbon-doped SiO₂ dielectric layer having a first etch rate and a carbon-doped silicon nitride dielectric layer having a second etch rate, wherein the carbon-doped SiO₂ dielectric layer and the carbon-doped silicon nitride dielectric layer have detectably different etch characteristics but generally equal dielectric constants, and wherein the first etch rate is greater than the second etch rate.

24. (new): A stack as claimed in Claim 23, wherein a dielectric constant of each of the carbon-doped SiO₂ dielectric layer and the carbon-doped silicon nitride dielectric layer is less than 3.5.

25. (new): A stack as claimed in Claim 24 wherein a difference in the dielectric constants of the carbon-doped SiO₂ dielectric layer and the carbon-doped silicon nitride dielectric layer is less than 10%.

26. (new): A stack of dielectric layers located over the surface of a substrate and comprising a carbon-doped SiO₂ dielectric layer having a first etch rate and a nitrogen-doped SiC dielectric layer having a second etch rate, wherein the carbon-doped SiO₂ dielectric layer and the nitrogen-doped SiC dielectric layer have detectably different etch characteristics but generally equal dielectric constants, and wherein the first etch rate is greater than the second etch rate.

27. (new): A stack as claimed in Claim 26, wherein a dielectric constant of each of the carbon-doped SiO₂ dielectric layer and the nitrogen-doped SiC dielectric layer is less than 3.5.

28. (new): A stack as claimed in Claim 27 wherein a difference in the dielectric constants of the carbon-doped SiO₂ dielectric layer and the nitrogen-doped SiC dielectric layer is less than 10%.